

BOOK REVIEW

D. JESSE WAGSTAFF. 2008. **International Poisonous Plant List: An Evidence-Based Reference.** (ISBN 978-1-420-06252-6, hbk.). CRC Press, Taylor and Francis Group, 6000 Broken Sound Parkway NW, Suite 300, Boca Raton, Florida 33487-2742, U.S.A. (**Orders:** orders@taylorandfrancis.com, 1-800-272-7737, 1-800-374-3401 fax). \$149.95, 464 pp., 8 3/4" × 11 1/4".

Appropriately, the glossy cover of this book sports a photo of bright, red aril-wrapped cones of *Taxus* (yew) at the end of a branch. Perhaps it's to hint that poisonous plants can be double-edged swords, serving as life-saving drugs, yet capable of harm. Such is the case for the poisonous alkaloids in *Taxus* that hold hope for cancer patients. Once in the book, the author sets out his objectives. Two of his objectives for the book are indicated in the title. First, he wanted the book to be international in use. To this end, he created a checklist that is alphabetical by genus, and to the extent possible, used accepted scientific names, including the plant name author. And to my delight, he lauded the importance of a codified taxonomy in the field of toxicology. Secondly, he wanted inclusion of a plant in the book to be based on primary sources, hence "An Evidenced-Based Reference" is part of the title. He alludes to the fact that the field of poisonous plants is most susceptible to erroneous reporting and repeated passing on of such information. Each plant entry, therefore, has anywhere from one to 20 or more citations for each species of plant. The third objective was to cross reference each entry with common names and synonyms, thus increasing the utility of the book. The book is, no doubt, a must-have reference for toxicologists, researchers, poison control centers, trade officials, physicians, and veterinarians.—Robert J George, Botanical Research Institute of Texas, 500 E 4th Street, Fort Worth, Texas 76106-4025, U.S.A.